

COLIN HANSEN'S FIBS ABOUT RIVER PRIVATIZATION¹

Rafe Mair©

When I've finished you will see why I call the Gordon (Pinocchio) Campbell government gigantic fibbers - to avoid the more appropriate "L" word. Let's go back to what Finance Minister Colin Hansen had to say about private energy projects and if you "Google" "Colin Hansen power" you will see and hear for yourself. It is a tissue of fibs.

- (1) He says BC is a net importer of power. That's a falsehood. *BC Hydro* is a net importer some years but BC as a *province* is a net exporter, That can be proved by looking at the figures from the National Energy Board which monitors exports. Moreover, when BC Hydro imports from Alberta it does so at "off peak" hours thus very cheaply and because Hydro can "store" energy as water in their reservoirs, it exports that power below the line during "peak" periods making a very tidy profit. To think that our Finance Minister doesn't know that, explains a lot about financial affairs he and the premier have grossly mismanaged and told fibs about. Hansen says that independent power producers are small outfits and that the rivers continue at "their normal stream". This, again, is an outrageous falsehood! Look at our website at www.thecanadian.org or www.saveourrivers.ca and see the visual evidence for yourself through Damien Gillis's videos.
- (2) Hansen says that only .03% of rivers will be used. The actual figure is double that but the important fact for British Columbians is that at least 600 rivers are targeted all of which have substantial fish values and the power plants will kill the ecology these rivers sustain. He neglects to mention the very substantial clear cutting required for roads and transmission lines.
- (3) Hansen says these projects are widely supported by many environmentalists. I can think of three - Tzaporah Berman who is seen by most environmentalists as a turncoat for her own profit, Dr. Marc Jaccard who is in the pay of the BC government and Dr. David Suzuki who only supported it if rivers were safe and, as I understand it - David can speak for himself, of course - he has serious reservations about the Energy Policy as being implemented.
- (4) Hansen says that these projects are "clean and green". It is safe to say that when you see the words "clean and green" the very opposite is true and that very much applies to the bunch who call themselves "Citizens for Green Power", an organization which shills for the private power producers. See the video yourself - the only true statement is the minister's name. Also remember that Pinocchio himself and the three who have been Energy Minister over the past several years have maintained that this private power is *to give BC energy sufficiency by 2016*.

Let me now tell you the real story. I have spoken around the province, written in articles and stated on radio and TV the following:

¹ The Common Sense Canadian, July 31, 2010

- (1) BC is not in need of energy and won't be for a very long time to come if we practice conservation, (a word foreign to us, sadly), upgrade present facilities, put generators on flood control dams and take back the power we're entitled to under the Columbia River treatment.
- (2) BC Hydro is forced by the government to enter contracts with private producers to buy power, on a *take or pay basis*, at double or more what they can sell it for on the export market.
- (3) I have said that this private power must be sold by BC Hydro because it can only be produced during the annual run-off thus is not available to BC Hydro in the colder months when Hydro can use it. Don McInnes, Head of Plutonic Energy, partnered with General Electric, stated that you would "have to have been on Mars not to know that this energy was for export".
- (4) I've stated that because BC Hydro must lose huge sums a year financing private energy producers (the contracts total about \$40 BILLION at this point), it will no longer be able to pay its handsome annual dividend to the BC Government but that *they will still pay the dividend by increasing rates to us the BC public!*

What we have not heard from Pinocchio and his ministers is an admission that this power is not for BC use as claimed, has *nothing to do* with making BC self sufficient and moreover is being *subsidized* by the public of BC through its crown corporation, BC Hydro. Now, however, the truth is out, though you had to read it in the *Globe and Mail*, not Canwest which is the laundry for the BC government's dirty linen. On Page S3 of the *Globe and Mail* for July 30 there is an interview under the headline, "POWER POLITICS, Will the Clean Energy Act clear the way for British Columbia to become a significant exporter of renewable energy?" Bill Bennett, the Energy Minister, the cabinet blab, states "we are actively working toward developing export opportunities to markets such as California. Many states and provinces want to reduce their emissions by replacing energy generated from carbon intensive fuels and we are in a unique position to offer these jurisdictions clean and reliable power generated at competitive prices. (I'll say!! RM) We will need to work with independent power producers as we seek and advance these opportunities."

"BC Hydro, as required under this act (the so-called Clean Energy Act - RM) will present to government an integrated resource plan on export opportunities. In the meantime, the government is committed to working collaboratively with the independent power industry."

To digress for a moment, you are probably asking yourself, as I have asked, if this is such a terrific idea, why isn't it being done by BC Hydro, our own company, so that all the profits would flow to the BC Treasury? For the purposes of this article I simply underscore the obvious - what I've been saying and writing has been absolutely true - this private power is **not** for BC consumption and that all the profits of this swindle go to private companies, not to the public of British Columbia where they belong.

We also must conclude, on the evidence of the minister responsible, that the sobriquet "Pinocchio" is indeed fitting for Gordon Campbell, the premier of this province who is justifiably shown by our cartoonist Gerry Hummel² with his pants on fire.

² <http://thecanadian.org/k2/item/190-gerry-hunnell-1>